

What is claimed is:

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1. A gripper, comprising:

first and second pairs of forceps, each pair of forceps including
5 an inner leg and an outer leg, each leg having an upper end and a
lower end, wherein the inner leg and outer leg of each pair of forceps
are connected together adjacent to their upper ends and define a
gripper at their lower ends, the inner and outer legs of each pair of
forceps being movable relative to each other within a plane of motion;
10 a connection joining together the inner legs of the first and
second pairs of forceps in an orientation such that both pairs of
forceps operate in the same plane of motion, wherein there is a
space between the upper ends of the inner legs through which a user
may insert a forefinger.

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2. A gripper as recited in claim 1, wherein said connection is
adjacent to the lower ends of said inner legs, and further comprising a
spacer mounted on said inner legs above said connection to hold the
inner legs apart above the connection.

3. A gripper as recited in claim 2, wherein said spacer includes a ring fixed to both of said inner legs.

4. A gripper as recited in claim 1, wherein said connection is a
5 spacer, holding said inner legs apart.

5. A gripper, comprising:

first and second pairs of forceps, each pair of forceps including inner and outer legs; a hinge joint connecting together said inner and outer legs, said hinge joint restricting the relative motion between the
10 inner and outer legs to motion within a plane, and each of said inner and outer legs defining a lower, gripping end, wherein the gripping end of each outer leg is movable inwardly, toward the gripping end of its respective inner leg within said plane of relative motion; and

15 a spacer connected to the inner legs of said first and second pairs of forceps above their gripping ends, said spacer holding said inner legs apart a fixed distance and holding said pairs of forceps in an orientation such that both pairs of forceps have the same plane of relative motion.

6. A gripper as recited in claim 5, wherein said inner legs are also joined together at a connecting point adjacent their gripping ends.

7. A gripper as recited in claim 6, wherein said spacer includes a
5 ring secured to both of said inner legs.

8. A gripper as recited in claim 6, wherein said spacer holds the inner legs apart approximately the width of a human forefinger.

10 9. A gripper, comprising:
first and second pairs of forceps, each pair including an inner leg and an outer leg, each of said legs including an upper end and a gripper end;
a connection joining the inner legs of said first and second pairs
15 of forceps together adjacent to their gripper ends; wherein the upper ends of said inner legs are spaced apart approximately the distance of a human forefinger.

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10. A gripper as recited in claim 9, and further comprising a spacer mounted on the inner legs above said connection so as to maintain a spacing between said inner legs.

5 11. A gripper as recited in claim 10, wherein the legs of each pair of forceps are movable relative to each other in a plane of motion, and wherein said connection orients said first and second pairs of forceps relative to each other so that they both operate in the same plane of motion.

10 12. A surgical method for joining together two tissue edges using two pairs of forceps, each pair of forceps having an inner leg and an outer leg, comprising the steps of:

15 holding in one hand the two pairs of forceps, said pairs of forceps being joined together with the gripping ends of their inner legs adjacent to each other, so that they both operate in the same plane of motion;

inserting a forefinger of said one hand into a space between the upper portions of the inner legs;

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pressing together the forefinger and thumb of said hand to
close one of said pairs of forceps to grip the first tissue edge;

bringing said first tissue edge near said second tissue edge,
and pressing together said forefinger and another finger of said hand
5 to close the other of said pairs of forceps to grip the second tissue
edge, holding the two tissue edges adjacent to each other.

13. A surgical method as recited in claim 12, and further comprising
the step of using the other hand to secure the two tissue edges
10 together.

14. A surgical method as recited in claim 13, wherein the other
hand operates a stapler to staple the tissue edges together.

15 15. A surgical method as recited in claim 13, wherein the other
hand sutures the tissue edges together.

16. A gripper as recited in claim 4, wherein said inner legs are
further connected together adjacent their gripper ends.

10073756-021102